

MITIGATION OR ACTION PLAN

Medicine Lodge Zone

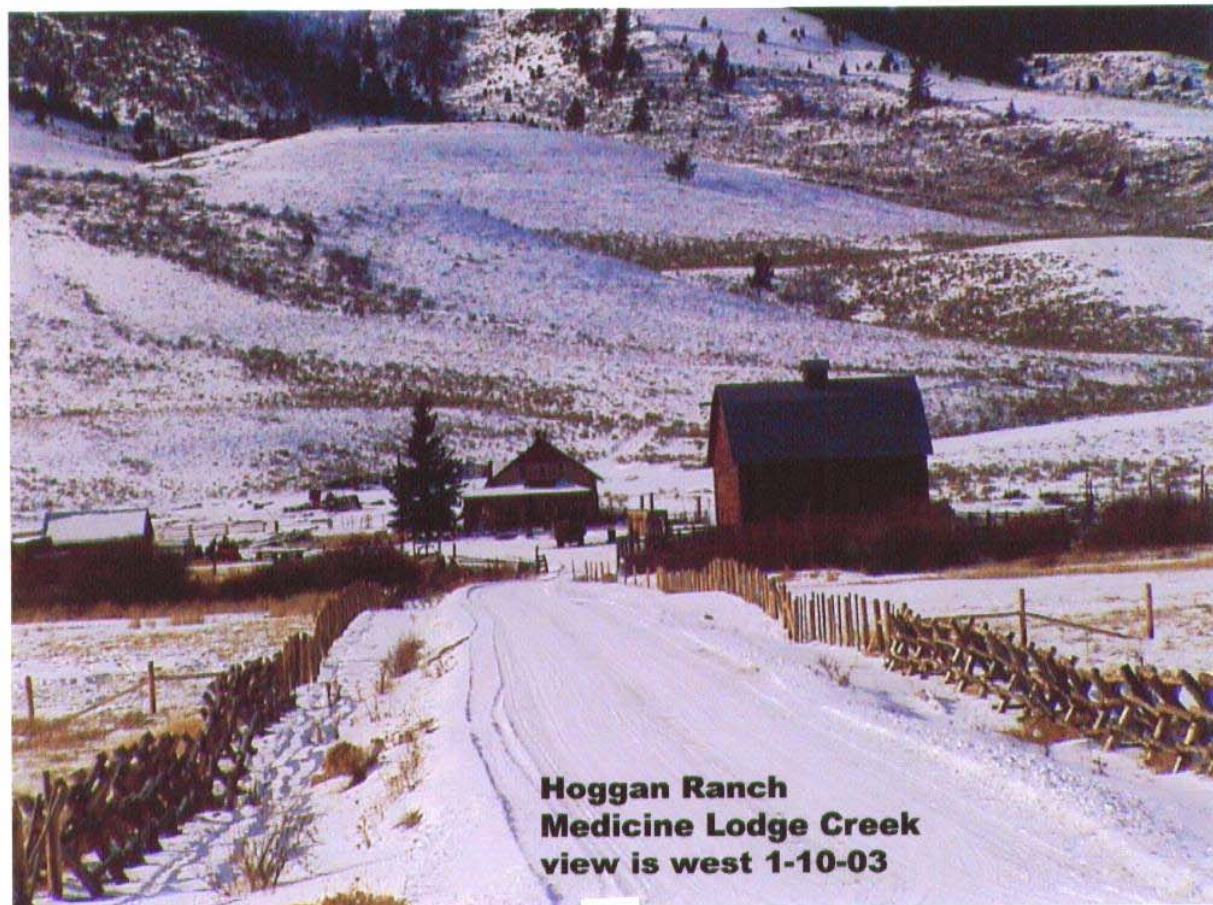
The Medicine Lodge drainage includes the east side of the Beaverhead Mountains and the west part of the Centennial Mountains. This zone includes Middle Creek and Indian Creek. It is 236,800 acres in size. The lower part of this area is rolling hills of sagebrush/bunchgrass. Mid-slopes blend from sagebrush to mahogany/juniper and on up to Douglas fir and Limberpine at higher elevations. Many of the north slope Douglas Fire stands are mature and are forming fuel ladders making hazardous fire conditions. There were 31 fires in the past and 16 of those fires were lightning cause and 15 fires were man caused. The large Indian Creek fire occurred in 1981 and burned 10,463 acres. It was ignited by a campfire during the sage grouse season. This zone is popular recreation drainage. The summer population is estimated to be 250 people on a peak day. There are 59,520 acres of private land in this zone. Ranching, farming and recreation are the main activities. The Fire Risk Rating for this zone is 37, a high risk.

Mitigation Plan:

1. Implement a fire prevention and education program that contacts businesses, residents and rural homeowners. This program would provide for fire risk evaluation of residences or businesses and provide a way to protect property for wildland fire. There is material now available for property owners to review and develop a safe zone around residences and other valued property. There are also other programs available for youth groups to visit areas and help them evaluate their property and provide suggestions on how to create safe zones around their homes and other structures. Materials are currently available from the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service. These materials could be provided in the summer of 2003. The youth fire risk evaluation program would be grant sponsored and could be requested for 2004.
2. Develop a county map of roads with names, numbers and signs so homes or businesses could be located for all emergencies including fires. Signs would be placed on the ground to guide emergency vehicles. A professional map service would be obtained to develop the map. After the map was developed, signs would be made and the signs would be installed on the ground. Contract for the map would be issued in 2003. The sign construction and ground installation would be done in 2004.
3. The City/County Volunteer Fire Department needs more volunteers to make the Department most effective. Giving proper training and compensation for training and for fire suppression may help encourage volunteers. The Spanish population has continued to grow in Dubois and many families own homes. Encouragement to all who live in the City to support the volunteers should be considered. This could begin immediately in 2003.
4. Future County development is done in a manner that protects homes from the threat of wildland fire. County Planning and Zoning should consider adopting the 30-foot set back clause for new homes being built and the wildland fire code for new construction. This would begin in 2003.
5. Burning permits have been available in Clark County for many years. The Dubois Ranger District has been issuing the permits for the State of Idaho. With

- the Sheriff's Office being designated as the Information Center, it would be the Sheriff's Office that would issue burning permits from May 10 through October 20. The Sheriff's Office would then notify the suppression forces stationed in Clark County of the burning permit issuance and its location. This would also include notifying the East Idaho Fire Dispatch located in Idaho Falls. This process would begin with the burning season on May 10, 2003. A handout would be made up by the County to pass out to all the homeowners and landowners in the County to remind them to obtain a burning permit. This handout will be prepared by the Wildland Fire Committee and reviewed and approved by the County Commissioners and sent out in May 2003.
6. With over 10,000 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CPR) ground in Clark County, this type of fuel needs treatment to isolate it from other fuels in the same area. The CPR would provide the ignition source for the rest of the surrounding area. In Medicine Lodge there are about 2080 acres of CPR land. Disking around the edges of the CPR ground could separate this highly ignitable fuel from the rest of the area. Grazing could also be effective in reducing the fuel in the CPR system. Disking or grazing could begin in 2003 and continue for the length of the CPR agreement.
 7. Develop a County Evacuation Plan. Clark County Emergency Services will work with all involved agencies to develop an Evacuation Plan. This will begin in 2003.
 8. Providing the appropriate fire service resources to maintain an effective emergency response system to wildland fires will depend on the Federal Agencies and their fire budget for the coming year. Both Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service provide initial attack units at Dubois, with helicopter and additional forces nearby with present funding. The City/County Volunteer Fire Department is often the first to arrive on a wildland fire and need a brush truck similar to the engines the Forest Service uses. This type of fire engine would be much more efficient than rolling the larger fire trucks to wildland fires. Forest Service has one of these engines available for this coming season and would make it available to Clark County. Grants are available to transfer this type of brush truck and should be done the spring of 2003.
 9. Explore the potential of making dead timber available as firewood for the general public in Federal fuel reduction programs. As a fuel reduction measure, support the Caribou-Targhee N.F. in making dead timber along forest roads available for firewood. This should begin in 2003 on the Dubois Ranger District.
 10. Encourage hazard fuel treatment on Federal, State, and private lands adjacent to moderate and high-risk areas. The hazard fuel reduction treatments on Federal, State, and private lands will be prioritized each year. Since this priority list will have new projects added, they will be evaluated and prioritized each year.
(Appendix e)
 11. Wildland conditions are continually changing in the County and the wildland committee should meet quarterly beginning October 2003 to review the plan and update where needed.

**Whitaker Ranch
Medicine Lodge Creek
view is northeast 1-10-03**



**Hoggan Ranch
Medicine Lodge Creek
view is west 1-10-03**

